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United States Department of State

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Washington, D.C. 20520

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Congressional

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Dear Senator Pell:

The President has asked me to respond to the recent letter which the Senate Foreign Relations Committee sent to him expressing horror over the tragic genocide in Rwanda and asking that international action be taken to bring those responsible for this genocide to justice. I am pleased to inform you that the United Nations, with our support, has begun to investigate genocide in Rwanda. Let me take this opportunity to inform you of some of the steps we and other concerned governments have taken to address this issue.

The United States was a cosponsor of UN Resolution 935, adopted July 1, which establishes an impartial commission of experts to examine and analyze information on violations of international humanitarian law, including possible acts of genocide, in Rwanda. The resolution calls upon states and international humanitarian organizations to make available to the commission of experts all substantiated information in their possession related to "grave violations of international humanitarian law, including breaches of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, committed in Rwanda during the conflict." The Secretary General will report the conclusions of the Commission of Experts to the Security Council.

In our statement to the UNSC in support of the resolution, Ambassador Gnehm emphasized the need for the commission of experts to build upon the work of the UNHRC Special Rapporteur for Rwanda. He also stressed the need to fix responsibility on those who have directed these acts of violence, in order to transform revenge into justice, affirm the rule of law, and bring to a close the horrible cycle of violence which has gripped Rwanda.

The Honorable  
Claiborne Pell,  
United States Senate.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE

REVIEW

AUTHORITY: HARRY R. MELONE

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The Special Rapporteur, in his report on Rwanda released June 28, suggested the establishment of an "international jurisdiction" to judge those persons implicated in committing acts of genocide. The Secretary of State has stated that genocide has occurred in Rwanda; the United States supports international accountability.

In response to the concern expressed in your letter over whether the self-proclaimed Interim Government of Rwanda is legally entitled to control Rwanda's seat at the United Nations and on the Security Council, let me assure you that we are currently examining this issue and are consulting with other members of the Security Council.

Finally, your letter urged that we act to address the urgent needs of Rwandan refugees and displaced persons within Rwanda. The United States has already provided over \$94 million in humanitarian aid to the hundreds of thousands of refugees and over one million internally displaced persons. The United States has made almost one hundred airlifts to the region, carrying food, blankets, materials for shelter, and emergency supplies. We have dispatched a Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART) from USAID's Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance to the region to assess needs and speed up response to those needs. We will continue to work with private and international relief organizations to provide all possible assistance to the victims of the Rwandan crisis.

I hope that this information is helpful to all the members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. If I can be of further assistance on this or any other matter, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Wendy R. Sherman  
Assistant Secretary  
Legislative Affairs

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